

NORTH END/ DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT

PROPOSED ZONING

BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

December 1989



The Harborpark Plan has been developed to guide the reemergence of Boston's waterfront as a unique resource that is accessible to all residents of the city to live, work, and enjoy. The Plan will be enacted through a neighborhood-based review process to guide the redevelopment of the waterfront within the context of each individual neighborhood: East Boston, Charlestown, North End/Downtown, South Boston/Fort Point Channel, and Dorchester. The most important component of Boston's Harborpark Plan is the extensive community participation built into its planning process. In order to guarantee this participation, several neighborhood councils and citizen advisory committees have been established to review projects and policies and to make formal recommendations on a broad range of issues facing the harbor.

One of the groups fulfilling this role is the Harborpark Advisory Committee (HPAC). Appointed by the Mayor in October, 1984 at the inception of the Harborpark planning process, the HPAC is charged with advising the Mayor and the Boston Redevelopment Authority on waterfront issues. This group of 15 volunteers consists of five representatives of state and city government involved in waterfront planning and development, representatives of five private business and labor concerns located on the harbor, and one community representative from each of the five waterfront neighborhoods.

In the context of the North End/Downtown waterfront this city-wide group is complemented by neighborhood councils and other similar organizations such as the North

The Plan seeks to achieve these primary goals:

- to provide public access to the waterfront's unique opportunities for recreation, economic activities and affordable housing;
- to protect and enhance the waterfront's maritime-industries which require deep-water shipping channels and land-side facilities on the harbor; and
- to manage growth so that appropriately designed, mixed-use development occurs on the waterfront with benefits that are shared by all Boston residents.

End/Waterfront Neighborhood Council and its Land Use Subcommittee, the Boston Waterfront Neighborhood Association, and the North End Community Development Corporation.

The Harborpark District Zoning was developed to ensure that Boston's waterfront is accessible to all residents for housing, open space, transportation, public access to and along the harbor's edge, and commerce. The intent of the Harborpark zoning is to create a balance of these uses along the waterfront. The primary goals of the zoning are to provide continuous access along Boston's entire waterfront, protect the working waterfront by promoting water-dependent and water-related commercial activities, and promote balanced growth and mixed-use residential and commercial areas.



Dear Fellow Citizen:

The rezoning of Boston's North End/Downtown Waterfront represents the first step in the implementation of the City's new and ambitious "Harborpark Plan." The new zoning initiatives discussed in this tabloid will guide the much-needed and long-overdue revitalization of the North End/Downtown Waterfront. In turn, the revitalization of this area will serve to reunite the city to its waterfront and allow Boston residents to, once again, take pleasure in the valuable resources of Boston Harbor.

In 1984, I established the Harborpark Advisory Committee to study and make recommendations regarding any proposed policy or development affecting the harbor. The members of this committee have held over 700 meetings with neighborhood advocacy groups and city and state agencies to establish permanent guidelines for waterfront development in Boston.

The Harborpark Plan for the North End/Downtown Waterfront calls for a balanced approach to future growth in this area. Development will be encouraged to go forward, not only to bring jobs and economic activity to the waterfront, but to also to fund the creation of affordable housing units and significant public improvements such as public parks and recreational activities.

The redevelopment of the waterfront will expand the North End neighborhood to the water's edge, allowing the community to live on the harbor. Design guidelines will maintain the historic character of the waterfront, visually and physically uniting it with the adjacent North End neighborhood.

Ultimately the combined efforts of the community, the City, and the State will ensure that Boston Harbor is restored as a key resource for the city's social and economic life. The Harborpark Plan guarantees that the city's residents, workers, and visitors will be able to take full advantage of the great natural resource offered by the harbor and the surrounding waterfront.

Sincerely,

Raymond L. Flynn

Raymond L. Flynn
Mayor



HARBORWALK AND NEW PARKS

Allowing for public access to and along the entire waterfront through the completion of Harborwalk is a primary goal of the Plan. Developers will be required to preserve and create the waterfront walkway and provide new public parks as a part of every waterfront development. The open spaces provide recreational opportunities that are already drawing people to the harbor area. Through efforts to create more park land along the water's edge, a once deteriorating and inaccessible waterfront is being returned to all of the residents of Boston.

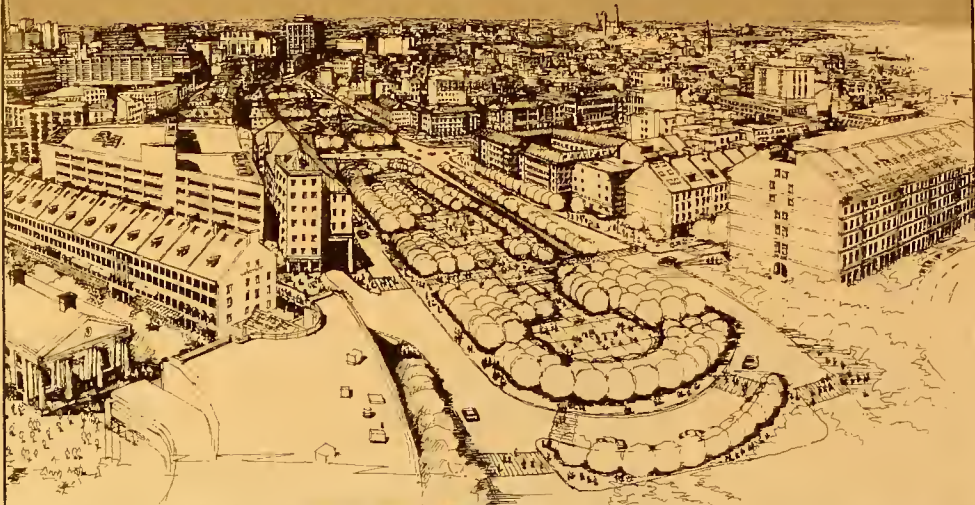
Some specific examples of existing parks and recreational facilities in the North End/Downtown Waterfront district include: the MDC Skating Rink/Tennis Area, Langone Park, Christopher Columbus Park, Rose Kennedy Garden, and Long Wharf. In the near term, at Sargents Wharf, Lewis Wharf, and Central Wharf, new parks and recreational facilities will be created.

Harborwalk

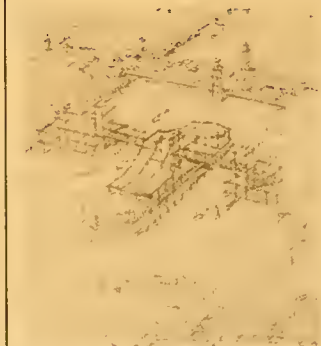
The centerpiece of the Harborpark's public access program is the "Harborwalk": an ambitious waterfront walkway system designed to create continuous public access along the entire harbor. It will provide a walkway to the water's edge leading to recreational, cultural, and historic attractions, and establish direct connections to public transit including water transportation facilities. When completed, Harborwalk will stretch along the entire 43 mile perimeter of the waterfront, with amenities such as seating, lighting, landscaping, and works of public art. It will connect the inner harbor from the Charlestown Navy Yard, through the North End/Downtown waterfront, across the Fort Point Channel to South Boston and the Dorchester beaches, forming a corridor of public access that brings the separate areas of the waterfront together.

Open Space Plan

The basic principle of the North End/Downtown Waterfront Open Space Plan is the reservation of at least one half of every development site as a public park. For example, at Central Wharf, a new public waterfront park, comparable to that recently completed at Long Wharf, will be built by the developer. Specific urban design guidelines have been crafted to ensure that the new parks are open and inviting to the public.



CONCEPTUAL PLAN FOR A NEW PARK ALONG THE CENTRAL ARTERY CORRIDOR. Rendering By Dognik Lee



NEW NORTHERN AVENUE BRIDGE
David Dixon Associates

TRANSPORTATION

The major roadway system downtown and along the harbor was last improved in the early 1950s. As downtown Boston has grown over the last thirty-five years, an improved and modernized system is necessary to ensure that the high quality of life is maintained and improved. Several major projects will improve transportation access along the waterfront, and help shift future growth out of the congested downtown core into underutilized areas.

Projects that are proposed or planned include:

- **Central Artery Northern Area (CANA) project:** CANA, phase one of the Central Artery project, will depress Route 1 off of the Tobin bridge under City Square in Charlestown and reconfigure the junction of Route 1, I-93, and Stonow Drive. The project will remove the traffic hazard at the merge, and remove the bottleneck on the north section of the Central Artery.



HINGHAM/ROWES WHARF COMMUTER BOAT
Joey Libby



AIRPORT WATER SHUTTLE Joey Libby

- **New Northern Avenue Bridge:** Currently under construction and slated for completion in 1993, the new bridge represents the initial investment in a new roadway system for the area. The bridge will allow growth to occur in the Fort Point Enterprise Zone, outside of the congested downtown core.
- **Central Artery Depression:** Over the next ten years the existing Central Artery superstructure will be placed underground. This action will expand transportation access to and through the city, and will allow city planners to reconnect the downtown area with the waterfront. A new system linking North Station and South Station along Atlantic Avenue is possible as well. New parkland will be created along the path of the former Artery, helping to link the downtown to the waterfront and Christopher Columbus Park.

Water Transportation

Water transportation can relieve demand on heavily used roads, making it a valuable extension of Boston's transportation network.

Examples of current routes include:

- **Rowes Wharf to Hingham Dock:** Established in 1984, monthly rider total in that year was 12,600, with that figure more than tripling since then.
- **The Logan Airport Water Shuttle:** Established by Massport in 1985, the ferry currently carries 3,500 passengers each week.
- **The Charlestown Navy Yard - Pier 4 to Long Wharf Shuttle:** Established by the Boston Redevelopment Authority in April of 1987, ridership has risen from 3,300 during the first year, to nearly 100,000 a year later.

In the new zoning the Downtown Waterfront will be a water transportation priority area. Developers will have to include and maintain water transportation facilities as components of their projects. This effort is being carried out to ensure that sufficient, high quality infrastructure will be in place to support the emerging water transit network. As appropriate, water ferries, shuttles, and taxis, serving a variety of routes and users, will be provided.



NORTH END/DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT

For more than 300 years the fate of Boston Harbor and the region have been intertwined. The vitality of the waterfront fueled the growth of Boston as a center of international commerce from the eighteenth to the early twentieth century. In the middle of this century many businesses abandoned the waterfront, leaving rotting piers and empty warehouses as symbols of Boston's economic decline.

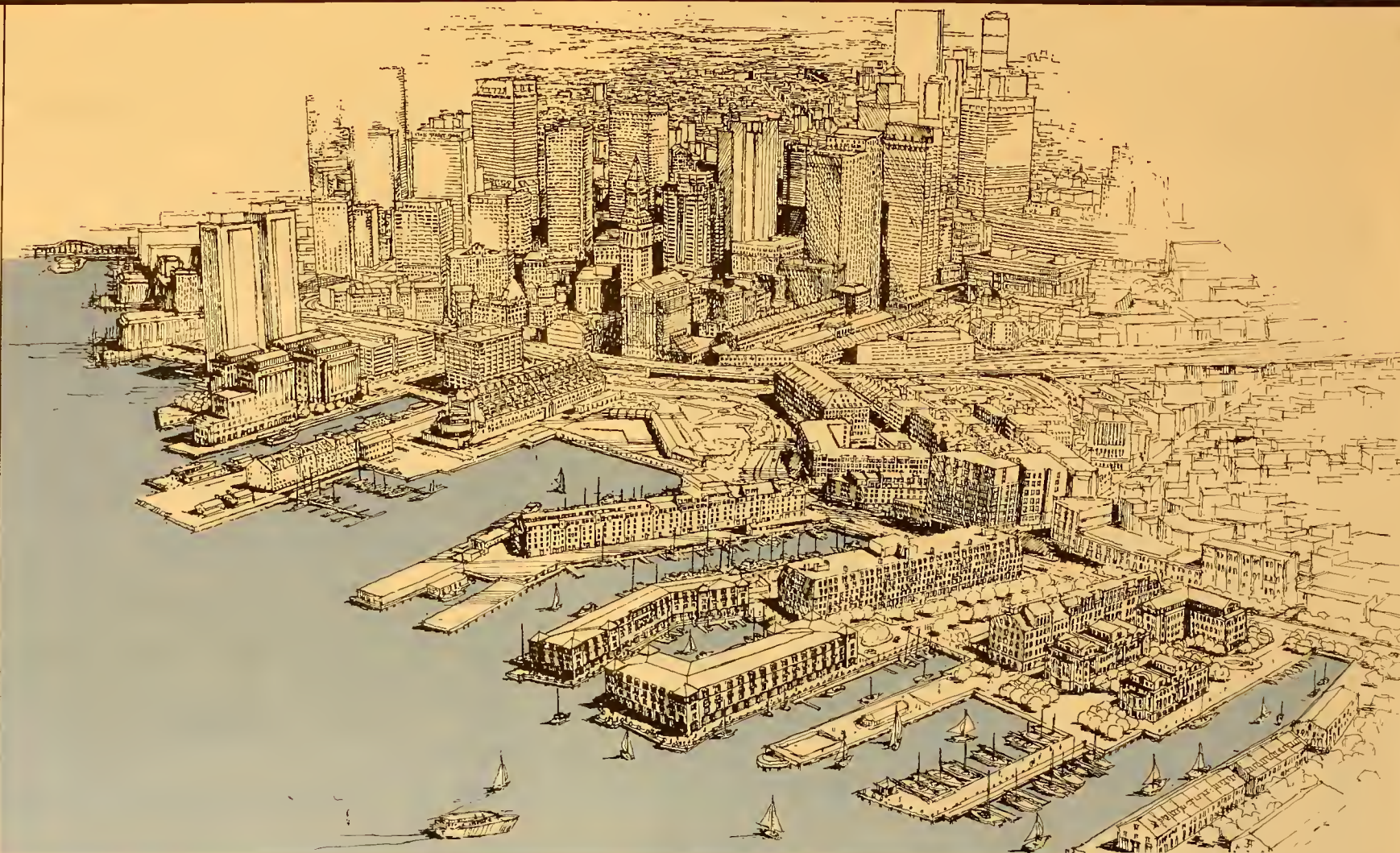
In the last two decades, as Boston has reemerged as the center of a vibrant New England economy, areas of the waterfront were rediscovered as sites for new offices and luxury housing. However, many of these new developments stand as barriers between the city and the harbor, permanently replacing water-dependent businesses, and not providing benefits to the residents of the city. Pressures to continue this trend grew stronger as the city's economy boomed in the early 1980s. In response to these conditions, the Harborpark Plan has been developed to ensure that new development on the harbor is managed in a way that protects the waterfront's unique resources while ensuring that all residents have access to benefits created by waterfront revitalization.



1806 NORMAN PLAN OF BOSTON
The Bostonian Society

The North End/Downtown Waterfront plan concentrates the link between the North End neighborhood and the waterfront through the creation of housing, at least 25% of which is to be affordable. Projects at Sargents Wharf, Lewis Wharf, and Central Wharf will create a mix of housing, hotels, and commercial buildings. Half of the land on each site will be devoted to open space, and the developments must include public access via Harborwalk connections. The preservation of water views is also a fundamental principle in the planning of the projects.

Downtown Boston will be extended to the waterfront through this appropriately scaled mixed-use development with a strong commercial base. This area presently serves as a major connector for water transportation at Long Wharf and Rows Wharf. As water transportation services continue to expand, the downtown waterfront will support expanded service at Central Wharf and link other waterfront areas to downtown Boston, such as East Boston, the Charlestown Navy Yard, the Fort Point Channel District, and the North and South Shores.



Central Wharf

The proposed relocation of the New England Aquarium to a new home in the Charlestown Navy Yard affords the opportunity for redevelopment of Central Wharf. The deteriorating pier between Long Wharf and Central Wharf will be repaired to complete a missing link at one of the most heavily used locations in the continuous walkway envisioned along the water's edge. A major boat terminal is planned at this emerging hub of the City's rapidly expanding water transportation system. In conjunction with the MBTA's improvements to the Aquarium Blue Line station, the terminal will provide improved transfer between the boat and subway.

In addition, the development plan includes office, hotel, and cultural uses compatible with the mixed-use character of the surrounding area and a new two acre public park. The park, to be built by the developer, will be comparable to the new public park on Long Wharf. The buildings planned for the wharf

will follow the historic building patterns of the finger piers, allowing for view corridors both across the wharf and from the adjoining Custom House district to the Harbor.

Boston's original 1924 zoning law established a 155' height limit (about twelve stories) along the downtown waterfront. Building heights for Central Wharf are guided by this historic precedent rather than the adjacent 400' tall Harbor Towers. Heights no greater than 55' will front the harbor. Facing the city, on the old Atlantic Avenue side of the wharf, buildings will step up to 155'. These heights correspond to the height of the historic buildings in the Custom House District and surrounding mercantile wharf buildings. On Central Wharf a variety of building heights is envisioned — five, seven, ten, and twelve stories — just as in the surrounding historic areas.

Lewis Wharf

The Gunwyn Company's proposal for Lewis Wharf will establish an active new mixed-use development on the North End waterfront which emphasizes public access and accommodation. The proposed project includes a 260 room marine inn and below grade parking.

Over three acres of publicly accessible open space will be created as a result of relocating the present 233 at grade parking spaces in the underground garage. Shade trees, benches, and pedestrian ways will be provided to invite the public to the water's edge.

The marine inn consists of two red brick structures sited on either side of a sheltered marina. Proposed building heights step down to the water's edge from the Lewis Wharf Granite Building and Pilot House, which are seven stories high. Water views aligned with Fleet Street will create a strong visual connection from the North End across the site to the harbor.



THE NEW BOSTON WATERFRONT Elaine Hagglin

To encourage greater public awareness of the variety of activities that take place in Boston harbor, a public shipwatching/maritime educational station is planned within the marine inn. Interactive exhibits, wall charts, coin-operated binoculars, and a harbor traffic radio monitor are planned to inform visitors about the historic and current uses of Boston's working waterfront.

Sargents Wharf

The Boston Redevelopment Authority is presently reviewing six proposals submitted in response to a Request for Proposals for the development of 100 units of affordable housing as well as market rate housing on Sargents Wharf. Ground floor retail space, facilities for water transportation, and water-related services are also planned.

Sargents Wharf, which includes 112,000 square feet of land area and 70,000 square feet of open water extending to the 1880 pier-head line, is the last remaining publicly owned waterfront site along the North End waterfront. Over 2 acres of open space and pedestrian ways will be created, allowing for continuous public pedestrian access along the entire water's edge and a new public park on the site. Sargents Wharf directly adjoins the North End and is within walking distance to Quincy Market, Government Center, and the Financial District.

URBAN DESIGN AND LAND USE PLAN

From an urban design perspective, the challenge presented by the Plan is one of integrating the North End/Downtown Waterfront's land and water resources in ways that enhance the historic character of the waterfront and promote public access and use of open space. The primary urban design objectives are:

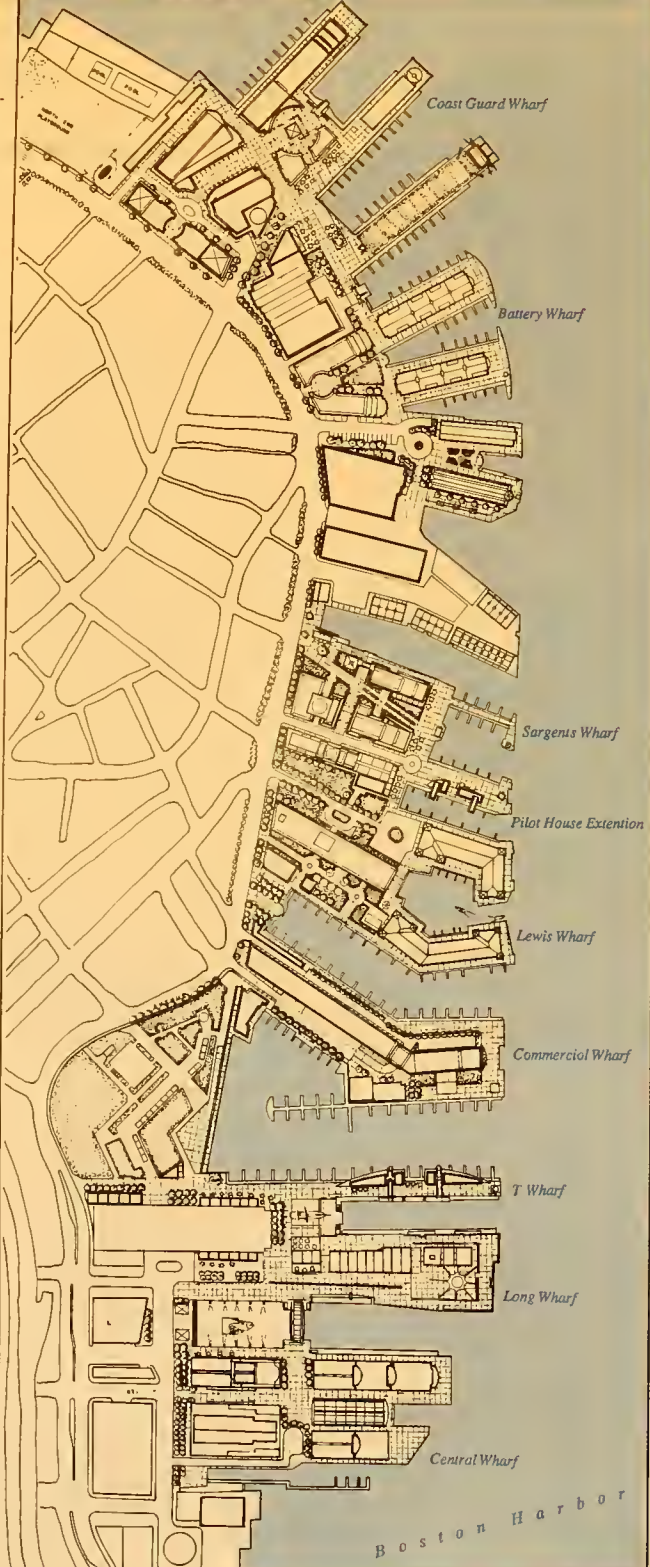
- to preserve the original, historical form and character of the area;
- to maintain views of the harbor and provide visual and physical links back from the waterfront to adjacent downtown and neighborhood communities; and
- to ensure that the height, scale, and massing of new development relates to the adjacent neighborhoods and that newly constructed buildings continue to reflect and blend with the existing historic waterfront architecture.

Specific guidelines for the North End/Downtown Waterfront have been developed. The diagrams below indicate the recommended building layouts to maintain water views, to maximize public open space, and to recreate the historic Boston waterfront building design.

A vision for Boston's harbor, year 2020:

- The inner harbor redevelopment will expand the North End neighborhood and provide diverse maritime activities for its residents and the citizens of Boston.
- Hanover Street will be extended to the harbor's edge through the redeveloped Coast Guard facility, which will become an active mixed use center for the North End and the city. Housing, neighborhood commercial uses, marine uses, and major open space will balance with planned development for the Central Artery corridor at the other end of Hanover Street.
- New residential uses at Battery, Sargents, and Commercial Wharves, and the Pilot House extension will be balanced by 50% open space requirements and supported by ground floor retail activities.
- A new hotel at Lewis Wharf will bring more people to the harbor in the evenings, which will increase the use of the Harborwalk and allow for a twenty-four hour presence in the area.
- Long Wharf and the "T" Wharf extension will be the center public transportation core for the downtown waterfront. Adjacent to a waterfront park, this area will be the public doorstep to the harbor, providing more open space for public events.
- Central Wharf mixed use commercial and public activities will combine with Rowes Wharf and the Marriott Hotel to provide a place for visitors to enjoy the harbor. These hotels will provide more evening and weekend visitors to the Harborwalk and various public activities within the area.

This vision for the future of the Boston Harbor provides for a balanced mix of uses. These projects will provide the activity needed to ensure the revitalization of the harbor by bringing people to the precious amenity of water.



ZONING

The Harborpark District Zoning was developed to ensure that Boston's waterfront is accessible to all residents for housing, open space, transportation, public access to and along the harbor's edge, and commerce. The intent of the Harborpark zoning is to create a balance of these uses along the waterfront. The primary goals of the zoning are to provide continuous access along Boston's entire waterfront, protect the working waterfront by promoting water-dependent and water-related commercial activities, and promote balanced growth and mixed-use residential and commercial areas.

The Harborpark District Zoning Plan sets aside more than 1000 acres of waterfront land as open space and initially reserves 660 acres for maritime industries. It includes requirements for 50% open space on new private development and public access along the perimeter of all sites. It creates height, density, and use controls and establishes development and design review guidelines. Development and design review requirements will guarantee that new waterfront development is in character with the existing waterfront and is compatible with nearby residential areas. The zoning also targets areas for affordable housing for Boston residents and establishes a Water Transportation Priority Area to guarantee that new projects incorporate docks or piers for shuttles and ferries.

The zoning for the North End/Downtown Waterfront area replaces the Harborpark Interim Planning Overlay District. The Harborpark IPOD was created in March 1987 to establish temporary zoning to assure appropriate growth and to protect the waterfront from inappropriate uses, permitted by the underlying zoning, while permanent zoning was being established. Since the IPOD was created, a comprehensive planning study has been developed, which the new zoning implements. The North End/Downtown Waterfront zoning plan includes:

- Proposed Chapter 91 Tidelands regulations for public access, water dependent uses and activation of the waterfront. The zoning, as the key element of the Harbor Management Plan, will be submitted to the Department of Environmental Protection for approval as the plan to govern waterfront development.
- A Housing Priority Area is established in the North End Waterfront, in which two-thirds of any project must be housing. The overall goal is to obtain 25% affordable housing in this area.
- Fifty percent of all project sites must be preserved as open space with a major portion dedicated to the public. Public access requirements require projects to provide a continuous walkway along the water, open to the public. The North End Playground and Christopher Columbus Park are established as Open Space Subdistricts.
- Proposed projects on all waterfront lots must conform to environmental protection and safety standards for trash disposal, areas for recyclable materials and provision of safety ladders. Safety ladders must be located every one hundred feet along portions of the water with seawalls, piers and wharves.
- 55 foot height limits are established overall in the North End Waterfront except for 75 feet on Sargeants Wharf and on the Pilot House Extension.



- Limits on rooftop additions are established, stating that no roof structure may be erected or enlarged on the roof of an existing building without public notice and a hearing. Roof structures must be architecturally consistent with the distinctive historical and architectural character of the area.
- At least 40% of the first floor of any project must be devoted to facilities of public accommodation, and in the Downtown Waterfront an additional 25% must be for a public cultural facility. In the Downtown Waterfront, no residential uses will be permitted on the first floor on piers.
- To ensure the blending of new and old architecture along the waterfront, the massing and character of buildings should reflect the historic, linear finger-pier wharf buildings. Buildings should be set back to allow for waterfront walkways, and massing and heights should be stepped up from the water's edge to allow for views of and from the waterfront and to provide a transition from the waterfront to the downtown skyline.
- In order to ensure that public access to the waterfront is maintained, setback provisions of 35 feet from the ends of piers in the North End, 50 foot setbacks in the Downtown Waterfront, and 12 foot setback from the sides of all piers are required. Public access requirements include a continuous walkway along the water, open to the public, called Harborwalk.

- All projects are required to include a water transportation facility commensurate with the scale and location of the project. A Water Transportation Priority Area is established in the Downtown Waterfront in which developers of major waterfront projects will be required to include decks or piers for ferries, shuttles, or water taxis.
- Prior to 1965, the historic height limit for this entire area was 155 feet. Height limits were eliminated in the 1965 Zoning Code, but are now reestablished for the waterfront. New height limits are consistent with or below the historic height limit first enacted in 1924.
- In order to limit pier extensions seaward and provide an adequate navigation channel, in the North End Waterfront a pier may be extended a maximum of 12 feet at the ends only for public access and open space. In the Downtown Waterfront a pier may be extended a maximum of 50 feet beyond the 1880 Pierhead line only for publicly accessible open space and water-dependent uses.

Ultimately these efforts will restore the harbor as a key resource for the city's social and economic life. The Harborpark District Zoning Plan ensures that the city's residents, workers and visitors will be able to take full advantage of the great natural resources offered by the harbor and surrounding waterfront.



COMMUNITY PROCESS

Neighborhood residents donate their time, energy, and abilities to formally and informally advise the Mayor and the City on harbor issues, letting the voice of the neighborhoods be heard and improving the quality of life in their communities. This grass-roots community involvement process has created a greater awareness of the important issues facing the city and has engendered a solid working relationship between the citizens of Boston, private developers on the waterfront, and public agencies involved in planning and development on the harbor.

North End/ Waterfront
Neighborhood Council
The Boston Waterfront
Neighborhood Association
The North End Community
Development Corporation
Boston Shipping Association
The Boston Harbor
Associates

The following is a list of B R A Hearing and Approval dates for the remaining components of the Harborpark Zoning.

HEARING		APPROVAL
Dec 14	North End/ Downtown Waterfront	
Jan 11	Dorchester	<i>North End/ Downtown Waterfront</i>
Jan 25	Charlestown	<i>Dorchester</i>
Feb 15	Fort Point Channel	<i>Charlestown</i>
Mar 15		<i>Fort Point Channel</i>

CITY OF BOSTON
Raymond L. Flynn
Mayor

BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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